

REMARKS

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's thorough consideration provided the present application. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7-10, 12, 13 and 15-19 are now present in the application. Claims 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 17 and 18 have been amended. Claims 6 and 14 have been cancelled. Claim 19 has been added. Claims 1, 9 and 19 are independent. Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner has indicated that dependent claims 4, 6, 7, 12, 14, 15, 17 and 18 would be allowable if rewritten to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants greatly appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter by the Examiner.

By the present amendment, independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claims 6 and 14, respectively, as described hereinbelow.

In addition, allowable claim 4 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 19. Accordingly, it is believed that claim 19 is in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 & 103

Claims 1, 5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nojima, U.S. Patent No. 6,222,. Claims 2, 9, 10, 13 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as

being unpatentable over Nojima in view of Ratnakumar, U.S. Patent No. 6,556,487. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

As mentioned, independent claims 1 and 9 have been amended to incorporate the subject matter of claims 6 and 14, which were indicated by the Examiner as including allowable subject matter. Accordingly, it is believed that claims 1 and 9 and their dependent claims are in condition for allowance. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103 are respectfully requested.

Additional Claim

As mentioned, allowable claim 4 has been rewritten in independent form as new claim 19. Accordingly, it is believed that claim 19 is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and allowance of additional claim 19 are respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the Office Action, and that as such, the Examiner is respectfully requested to send the application to Issue.

In the event there are any matters remaining in this application, the Examiner is invited to contact Joe McKinney Muncy, Registration No. 32,334 at (703) 205-8000 in the Washington, D.C. area.

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.17 and 1.136(a), Applicants respectfully petition for a one (1) month extension of time for filing a response in connection with the present application and the required fee of \$60.00 is attached herewith.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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